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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/181,547	10/29/1998	KISSEI MATSUMOTO	7217/57274	1034

7590 12/14/2004

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EXAMINER

CUFF, MICHAEL A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3627

DATE MAILED: 12/14/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/181,547

Applicant(s)

MATSUMOTO, KISSEI

Examiner

Michael Cuff

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 October 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101***

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 1-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Claims 1-28 a series of steps which are grounded in the abstract idea of, for example, conveying, determining, and completing. The broadly recited steps do not recite sufficient computer structure that are within "technological arts". Therefore, they do not satisfy the statutory requirements of 35 USC 101. See *In re Toma*, 197 USPQ 852 (CCPA 1978).

The changes to fix this issue are relatively minor. For example, Claim 1 could be re-written to incorporate an electronic communication network or claim 18 could incorporate a computer controller instead of a controller.

### ***Claim Objections***

Claims 2 and 19 are objected to because of the following informalities: Claims 2 and 19 are dependent upon canceled claims. This appears to merely be an oversight. Appropriate correction is required.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hendricks et al.

Hendricks et al. shows, figure 1, an advanced set top terminal for cable television delivery systems. The system has an operations center 202 (first storage, host side device, first sending/receiving (S/R) unit). The Cable Headend acts as the retrieval unit, decision unit, reproduction unit and the second S/R. Note that the Cable Headend acts as a distribution center and a network controller. The ability to recognize and store data is inherent in these functions. Supplemental data can be provided when user requests more (intent of user). Communication links allow requests and replies to be sent and received. Different audio quality can be achieved upon request (Figure 21 for CD quality audio option). Hendricks et al. also teach subscriber payments.

While Hendricks et al. teach essentially all the elements of the claimed invention with the exception of the system sends/ receives low-quality data when the user is not willing to make the payment as set forth in claims 1 and 18. However, the examiner takes Official Notice that such a practice is old and well-known. For example, it has been a long established practice to offer samples of proprietary work at a less than CD quality to entice a potential buyer', however, if the potential buyer refuse to make

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payment for the higher quality, only the lower quality data is available for sending.

Accordingly, to adding to the system of Hendricks et al. with the capability of sending/receiving low-quality data when the user is not willing to make the payment would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention since such a modification would have enticed potential buyers to purchase the better quality material.

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments filed 10/12/04 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant has argued the new limitation added to the independent claims. These issues have been addressed in the re-worded rejection.

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael Cuff whose telephone number is (703) 308-0610. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 to 5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert Olszewski can be reached on (703) 308-5183. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

*Michael Cuff 12/9/04*

Michael Cuff  
December 9, 2004